/630 cont./

114 Since the year 1923, when I bade farewell to the Yamana forever, the majority of the older persons who served me as reliable informants in my investigations have gone to a better world. Today it is impossible to determine accurately and completely the unaffected institutions of former times on the basis of questions (2), because very few survivors of the tribe either know

> 2. About a year after me Lothrop (b):161 tried to determine the customary terms of relationship of these natives. He confesses: "It is difficult to gather these words, because much time has passed since many of them were used" /cited in English/.

enough about them or grew up in them. Without doubt it was also the eleventh hour for me to undertake the research if it was to be successful and consolidate the total of previous factual data.

a. Proposal and Marriage

584 Among a people like the Yamana, who are divided into individual families, each devoting itself to food-seeking independently of others, the approach of two loving hearts and their union in marriage escapes the notice of an observer who spends but a short time there (3), for neither the courtship nor the

> 3. On the basis of reports hitherto available about courtship and the selection of partners, Cooper:164 came to the mistaken conclusion that "there are no fixed forms" /cited in English/.

wedding are surrounded by conspicuous festivities. Certain customs, however, are observed on these occasions. They are so pronounced that on the basis of them alone, excluding all verbal communication, the marital union of two young tribal members is recognized by the immediate neighborhood. Just as these two events take place according to definite, simple rules, so there

/630 cont./

584 are also established customs which apply to the actual marriage proposal and which set up certain limits as genuine barriers to marriage. A marriage among the Yamana never takes place without form and without rules, although in principle there is unlimited freedom in the choice of partners.

124 Our natives would like Europeans to know how much they value the responsible decision to enter the marriage union as an event, because it is significant for the tribal community. For this reason it is made known at least to the nearest fellow-tribesmen. On my third journey, the people wanted to show us the procedure of a wedding ceremony, but unfortunately the marriage plans of two young natives who had been fond of each other for a time finally fell through. I do not know of any European, missionaries possibly excepted, who personally witnessed the modest ceremony of a proposal /631/ and a wedding. Nevertheless, many presumptuous travelers gave their opinion of it. It is not worthwhile here to mention individual unreliable opinions. It is more important and, for several reasons, of special significance to describe here in detail existing customs of courtship and marriage.

1. The Marriageable Age

582 881 It never occurs to a Fuegian to count a person's age in years. Hence, they never set a definite age after which young people may marry. They presuppose, as an absolute condition, participation in the youth initiation, less because a certain age is thereby assumed, but rather because in that lengthy preparation the young man is trained in obtaining food and instructed in his behavior toward others, that is to say, he is educated to become a good and useful human being. First he must prove, as it were, his ability to lead an ordered, independent life and to work successfully economically before society agrees to his marriage. Most chaps were probably not spared attendance even a second time as actual candidates at the youth initiation, for only in this way did they obtain the right to take part in the men's ceremony. There was no similar condition connected with a second entrance

/632 cont./

before and after her confinement. I could not discover the specific words that were used. Every young Fuegian learns the meaning of the sexual act for himself, not by direct instruction, but by observing animals and by comparing his body with that of the opposite sex. He is aided in this by the very meager body covering and by the intimacy of Fuegian life. At first they do not seek actual enjoyment in the sexual act; "that comes later, after it has been tasted a number of times," old Julia confessed. A further reason is that in the years before physical maturity until marriage, the two sexes, even brothers and sisters, must remain apart, which restrains desire.

It cannot be denied, however, that girls after puberty and boys after the youth initiation are purposefully, albeit inconspicuously, prepared for all the events and obligations of marital life. First they are given many suggestions and repeated admonitions. They are told: "When you are married you must no longer dawdle about in such a carefree manner! -- Later you must always have a supply of meat for your wife and your children. -- Always be kind to your wife, for she gives you children. -- Do not quarrel with your husband, otherwise he will go to another hut and you will have to sleep alone in your hut; in the end he will be unfaithful to you, after he has slept several nights in the hut of another family!" I am indebted to Gertie for these words. Such statements unconsciously change the entire mental attitude of the young person toward the forthcoming start of his new life in marriage; he thinks about it more often and finally himself finds the more or less correct, but adequate explanation for many physiological facts which he observes from his own body.

Meanwhile, inevitably, the awareness of a still unattained fulfillment of physical and spiritual being increases to a passionate desire for a partner in marriage. "When the young people have been released from the [illegible], they cannot bear to live unmarried much longer. Some seem all the more excited and perturbed the longer they must wait for a marriage partner," Alfredo emphasized. "Now and then there is a girl who is quite uncontrolled in her behavior and who will suddenly throw herself into the arms of any boy because she does not want to live alone any longer; she longs for a husband and /633/ for children!"

/633 cont./

584 Mary told me this as she remembered one of her friends who had been dead for a long time (5). This urge of the sexes toward

5. Bove (e):137 is probably referring to this when he says: "The desire for a man is felt early among [the women], and the interference of the mission in these circumstances is regarded as the greatest tyranny of civilization."

each other is natural.

162 For the last three decades an unnatural disturbance of the equilibrium has predominated among the Indian population because there are not enough girls for the number of boys of marriageable age. When, on my second journey, I took leave of the Tamana in Puerto Remolino, Homestead joined me on my ride to Rio Carmen in the northeastern part of Isla Grande. His mother was a Selk'nam. He hoped to find a partner among this tribe, and on the way he repeatedly and longingly confessed this to me. I very clearly recognized his ardent desire. He stayed behind in the camp at Rio del Fuego where he had his eye on two girls who apparently understood and responded to his intentions. I did not wish to spoil his favorable prospects, and so I rode on alone (6).

6. See further details in Gusinde (b):154.

On various occasions I was told by several thoughtful older people: "How difficult the present situation is for many boys, because there are no suitable girls for marriage!" These words expressed a deep sympathy for a natural but unfulfilled desire. Truly, there is great tumult and agitation in the heart of a marriageable Fuegian until he completely possesses his beloved!

583 If we wish to establish a definite age in numbers, we need not resort to mere guesses. According to the missionaries and a few well-informed Indians, the average young man marries between the ages of 17 and 18, a weakling somewhat later. It is required -- and the boy's nearest relatives talk to him in this

/633 cont./

582 vein -- that he show, aside from the maturity of judgment demanded, sufficient physical stamina to act the man fully and completely in making a living. In the case of girls, even
582 though actual maturity has long since taken place, the Fuegians
826 wait until considerable physical fullness and a certain shapeliness have been attained, this being regarded as the necessary condition for motherhood. The shape of the breasts is not a decisive as the broadening of the hips, which sets in quite suddenly after the start of puberty. Once I heard: "As long as a girl is too slim and delicate, she must not give herself to a man; her child would be born too weak and small!" It is the mother herself who keeps her daughter in the family hut until, according to her judgment and that of her female neighbors, the girl has the physical strength to become a mother successfully for the first time. This is usually at the age of 15 or 16; a few strong girls marry a year earlier (7).

7. Bove (c):128 and (e)=157, on the other hand, sets the marriageable age lower. "The marriage of Fuegians generally takes place early; already at 12 or 13 years of age the girls run after men, but they do not become mothers until they are 17 or 18. The men marry between the ages of 14 and 16." Wieghardt:40 repeats this word for word. Lovisato (b):150 gives even lower figures. Hyades (q):377 mentions the 13th year for girls. According to Bridges (i):21, "girls were given in marriage from 14 years onward" /cited in English/. Hyades (f):573 is demonstrably inconsistent, for in another place he says: "Marriage takes place very late, about 18 or 20 years for girls, 25 for boys, on the average" /translated from French/.

584 /634/ As this account proves, boys and girls do not marry until they have fulfilled the requirements for a trouble-free economic life, on the one hand, and for healthy motherhood, on the other. This does not mean that occasionally a flirtation between

/634 cont./

584 two young people is not initiated much earlier and that they do not amuse themselves together as often as they have an opportunity, until finally none of the adults has any valid objections to their marriage.

2. Courtship of Marriageable Persons

584 162 Contrary to the inaccurate and false reports from the pens of several Europeans, we should like to emphasize strongly the freedom of choice in the selection of a mate. As has just been said, it is only in most recent times that there has been an imbalance in the numerical proportion of the two sexes. According to the general statements of several Fuegians whom I questioned, there were formerly exactly as many young men as girls of marriageable age (8). Assuming this, all the conditions for an

8. Bridges (k):240 definitely emphasizes that "the number of men and women is nearly equal" /translated from Spanish/. Nowadays it is probably impossible to determine whether the number of men or of women somewhat predominated; the few indications that I found point in favor of the latter. In June, 1884, when Bridges took an accurate census and the Mission Scientifique likewise determined the number of persons in the southern group, devastating diseases had already disturbed the equilibrium. We must take this into account in comparing those numbers. Compare Martial:215.

unhindered, free courtship of youthful lovers during the previous centuries seem fulfilled.

584 The natural shyness and reserve characteristic of the female population in Tierra del Fuego, more pronounced than elsewhere, explain why the young man makes the first advances in courtship. The girl probably never begins it. Usually the two know each other from earliest youth or late childhood. Individual families of the same dialect group meet occasionally, stay together a few

/636 cont./

584 days, like each other, and welcome every new chance meeting. Not infrequently they travel together for days. These are the opportunities for children from this or that family to become acquainted, despite the separation of the sexes strictly supervised by the adults. On such occasions they fall in love, and as they get older the separation until their next meeting, which often lasts a long time, /635/ becomes increasingly difficult to bear. In the play of innocent children, the wish to be together longer and more often becomes more and more insistent, until finally the boy and girl unconsciously take it for granted that they belong together forever and that they are quite apart from the others. Mary said: "When children are still small, one boy will like to play with one girl, two others will do the same, and yet two more. It is remarkable, the longer the time, the stronger they are attached to one another. But that is how it happens that when they are mature they long for the day when they can run to meet each other once more. Finally they marry, for they have already loved each other for a long time!"

Of course, each family also has social intercourse with one from another dialect group, though rarely. An attachment between the children of the one family and the other hardly can grow from this. It is fairly thrust upon them, however, by the repeated meetings of two families from the same circumscribed locality.

At puberty the desire to be together a great deal quickens the pulses of the two who have felt drawn to each other since childhood. "This is the time when they always want to be together; if they are separated, neither of them is happy. This is the time when they really love each other without expressing it. But each of them feels, nevertheless, that he is loved by the other; that is why he is drawn so much to the other person. They are satisfied just to be together; all they want is to be alone. They scarcely exchange a word, although they gaze at each other often. But being together makes them perfectly content. They lean closely against each other when they sit or lie on the ground. Sometimes they embrace for a time, often one will draw the palm of his hand over the head and body of the other. They spend hours this way, until they must part once more." Helly, to whom I am indebted

/535 cont./

• 534 for these words, told me frankly that almost never would one of the two permit himself unseemly contact on such occasions.

The frequent meeting of such a couple does not escape the attention of adult relatives of the boy and girl. If in their opinion a marital union is soon to be expected, they do not oppose it with warnings or prohibitions. "The more frequently the two meet and the longer they are together, the happier they will be when they live together, when they live in their own hut [as a married couple]!" This was one of Nelly's maximums. The length of time that the flirtation is permitted depends in any specific instance on various circumstances. The adult observers are not guided by a definite rule, but during this time one or another of the neighbors will make a remark from which the boy and girl are supposed to understand that their secret doings have not remained entirely hidden. For example, a close relative will say to the boy: "You like X [he mentions the name of the girl] very much, because you meet her so often in the forest!" To the girl they say: "That is an industrious and strong boy whom you have chosen; now /535/ he will probably marry you soon!" Neither the boy nor girl will talk with adults specifically about their love affair and their clandestine meetings.

I must infer from reliable indications that the two lovers scarcely ever make a formal declaration of love to each other. The conduct of one toward the other is clear in itself and expresses quite enough: the impulse with to be together all the time carries with it the decision to marry. The latter is frankly announced by the boy within the circle of his contemporaries, where he also points out the excellent qualities of his chosen one. By means of such conversations his own relatives and those of his bride are still more aware of his intentions. An unrestrained general discussion develops, and not infrequently the boy is abruptly asked when his marriage is to take place. The girl who is in love is conspicuously reticent with her own mother and her relatives, as well as among her female friends, about the matter that so deeply touches her heart. The former, however, sometimes succeed in loosening her tongue and making her speak, no matter how reluctant she is to struggle against her own shyness.

When the gossip about the love affair of this couple has continued for a while, the nearest relatives begin to prepare for the

/STY cont./

• STY marriage as though by contract. There has been no actual demand from any side. The decision to marry is hardly ever definitely communicated to the parents. The attachment begun and reciprocated at some earlier time has so unobtrusively pressed toward marriage that the persons of the immediate neighborhood sentimentally contribute the few external accessories that the ancient law of custom demands. This is desired in every case by the couple in love.

As we have said, it is not possible to determine exactly how long a love affair or courtship lasts, for the first attachment often begins in early childhood. I was also told that young people who suddenly meet and in whose hearts the spark of love was immediately kindled frequently decided to marry within a few days. Alejandro, who was young when his wife died, courted Elisa after four months. She had been released only a few days before from the [illegible] and previously had looked with favor on another boy. In the case of Alejandro and his chosen one, I could easily observe how the young people among the Yamana prepare the way for marriage. In his conduct, however, some of the pristine element was lacking, for he was a widower and through his contact with Europeans had become a decided fop. One might say, to set up an approximate formula: as soon as a certain, individually more or less high degree of mutual love and devotion has been achieved (9), the preparations for the marriage ceremony begin.

9. Hyades (8):304 is common with the following terse wording: "The marriage is generally founded on reciprocal affection" /translated from French/. With these words he at any rate admits the freedom of choice on both sides in the selection of a mate.

although no actual assertions regarding it have come from any side. /STY/ Although the goal of the courtship has been achieved, although from the beginning of the attachment this has been neither specifically recognized nor pursued. SD:630 gives the word [illegible], "to woo, to court."

/639 cont./

581 /Translated from Spanish./ Some visitors describe the beautiful, pleasing figure, even for the European eye, of individual young Fuegians; there were even some splendid specimens of human beings among them. That these persons, further idealized in the imaginations of young people anxious to marry, are the most sought after for a life-long union in marriage is too natural to have to be specifically substantiated. Anyone who is only moderately endowed physically is content to find a partner who is his equal. Nevertheless, luck and chance sometimes casts an unusually charming girl, and a lovable creature, into the arms of a less attractive boy for immediate marriage (13).

[115] 13. In long conversations with Fred and Nelly Lawrence I obtained the details, difficult to come by elsewhere, from which this account was written; later I also talked with other informants about it.

4. Freedom in the Selection of a Mate

• 584 Even those travelers and missionaries who are generally reliable give unclear accounts about the freedom of choice of girls before marriage, and these sometimes seem to be clearly contradictory. The uninfluenced private decision of young people who wish to marry is the rule and custom, but in exceptional cases a few old people, namely, the parents of the girl, violate this by their selfish and ruthless conduct. We must not, however, lose sight of the fact that the various assertions of travelers are sometimes mere fabrications and almost without exception are based on insufficient observation. Even in Bridges we can trace a change in his own opinion about marital conditions, since in later writings he undeniably contradicts what he said in the first years of his sojourn with the Fuegians. Obviously, any kind of courtship among marriageable young people would be futile if they were obliged to submit unconditionally to the arbitrary decision of other persons. Before we set forth the true state of affairs in this important arrangement, I shall repeat the divergent opinions of several Europeans of the last few decades. The shallow

/639 con./

583 assertions of earlier navigators do not, for obvious reasons, deserve attention.

583 /640/ Not at all infrequently regular bride purchase is mentioned, as Hyades (q):334, for example, does: "The woman is not, as a rule, consulted, she is usually purchased from her parents" /translated from French/ (14). Rove (c):157 expresses

> 14. Hyades (q):278 does not mention actual sale of the girl elsewhere: "The young girl is not consulted in the choice of a husband; the parents give her to the one who suits them and who is always the strongest and the most respected among the candidates" /translated from French/.

himself more in detail on the subject: "The relationship between the spouses can be regarded more as a commercial agreement. Among the various suitors for the daughter, the father chooses the strongest, the most skillful, the one who is the most compliant with regard to his wishes, and with this one he bargains about the number of skins which the son-in-law must give him and the number of days he must work for him. Only after the contract has been settled is the bride informed of it, and, no matter what her private feelings are, she takes care not to betray them, and, whether or not she is willing, she is led into the hut of the bridegroom." To this we merely wish to add briefly that in most cases the two young hearts have found each other long before their parents are aware of it, and that they can hardly ever be made to abandon their decision by outside influences. Even Bridges (c):233 at one time maintains that the bride is bartered: "The women were given in marriage, in many cases even sold, according to a certain rule. The payment was made in work or gifts of skins, etc. The required performance was in proportion to the importance of the parties. If the son-in-law was strong and the relatives of the woman weak, there was little or nothing, and there was much if the situation was reversed. The only rule was convenience or common interest" (15). Anyone who knows the social system of

> 15. Earlier Bridges (s):201 wrote about this

/840 cont./

583
584

in a different vein: "Sometimes the father of the girl is in great difficulty through several men expecting him to give him /sic/ his daughter. He, of course, gives her to him of whom he is most afraid; this, of course, makes the others his enemies" /cited in English/. This does not exactly agree with what he maintained shortly before (ibid., p. 184). And three years later he gives still another version: "Sons-in-law are expected, either by gifts or work, to purchase their wives" /cited in English/ (Mbl III, 117.1843). Thus, one contradiction after another.

the Yamana will find it impossible to reconcile it with this last description of conditions. In Outes (g):54 also we read: "They buy the women with gifts... If the gift is not enough, the father returns in a few months and takes back the woman, selling her to someone else. If the husband is displeased with his wife, he can send her back to her father, who must return the purchase price. In this case, while the father lives, she belongs to him anew, and he can again sell her" /translated from Spanish/. If such conditions really existed, a quiet, secure family life would be found only in an infinitesimally small number of huts (16).

16. Similar statements exist, in Wieghardt: 40, for example. From all this Spears:69, who in other respects is not very reliable, not too incorrectly concludes: "Marriage was a matter of purchase and sale; wives were sold, sometimes, by husbands, and daughters were invariably sold by fathers" /cited in English/. Thus one inaccurate report is linked to another.

This is obvious and needs no substantiation.

584 /841/ In reality, marriageable boys and girls commonly have unimpeded freedom of choice, except for the few obstacles to marriage about which the uncle or the aunt in particular must be

/661 cont./

on the alert. It is also simply inconceivable that a girl should be forced into a marital union with a boy who does not like her. She would be adequately protected against coercion by his relatives. Every adult knows very well that a woman who no longer cares for her husband -- she previously joined herself to him in the free choice of love -- leaves him and will not be chained to him by any means. It is true that sometimes female relatives direct the attention of the girl to a particular chap who, in their opinion, would be suitable for her, but they do not dare press her.

What incorrectly informed Europeans call "payments" are actually voluntary gifts which the bridegroom or son-in-law gives the father of his chosen one from a sense of courtesy and gratitude, joy and satisfaction. This custom belongs in the category of obligations of the son-in-law toward his father-in-law. It is natural that the former makes an effort to learn indirectly the special wishes of the latter and to consider them as far as possible. To speak of a definite price range and standard of value of these free gifts is altogether false. Prominent, wealthy, or mighty families who are able to make certain demands for the marriage of their child do not exist among the Tamana, nor is personal competence or the individual qualities of a marriageable young man weighed against material values. If a chap makes extraordinary efforts to win the girl and finally succeeds because she yields, it is quite in order for him to make lavish gifts to her parents.

As long as this custom exists, it is taken for granted that the father of the girl expects something from his future son-in-law (17).

17. To this extent Stirling's assertion of March, 1884, is justified: "The father of the future bride expects ransom-money. On this occasion, an axe, a blanket, a knife, some fishhooks, beads, etc., form part of the price. Sometimes the future son-in-law serves for a period, I believe, the father of the betrothed, or presents a canoe, etc." /cited in English/ (VSA: XI, 339,1884). A commercial pact, such as Spegazzini (a):185 describes, is never made.

/641 cont./

583 This, according to Outes (g):54, includes either knives, harpoon
584 points, and finished weapons, or skins and flint, sometimes even
431 a new canoe. Neither the son-in-law nor the father-in-law regards such things as an actual purchase price for the delivery of the marriageable girl, for there is never any mention of this when the chap makes inquiries of the father of his beloved.

I was emphatically assured that sometimes special gifts were not given the parents of the girl, either during the courtship /642/ or at the marriage, and some men do not bring more than a large sea lion. After Alejandro finally won the long-wooed Elisa (p. 330), he did not give her parents the least little thing. Her mother, Adelheid, somewhat disappointed over this behavior of her present son-in-law, told me: "Alejandro is a fop; he acts as though he were a European and does not know what used to be customary among us Yamana." In the end, how could insignificant trifles compare with the fact that a girl is willing to give herself to a husband (18)!

18. The following assertion in Outes (g):55 definitely shows the impossibility of the conditions which he describes: "If the gift is not enough, the father returns in a few months and takes back the woman, selling her to someone else. If the husband is displeased with his wife, he can send her back to her father, who must return the purchase price" /translated from Spanish/. We come across similar discrepancies among other Europeans who never became properly acquainted with procedures in Tierra del Fuego.

It is equally incorrect to speak of "dowry" in connection with those insignificant possessions that the young woman takes when she goes to her husband. Certain things, such as clothing and ornaments, simply belong inseparably to her, whether she is married or not, and this private property is not in the least augmented when she leaves the parental hut and goes to her chosen bridegroom. Bove (x):188 writes: "A canoe and a harpoon are

/642 cont./

583 the bride's dowry." This interpretation is meaningless. The
584 canoe, without which a young married couple cannot exist, is
431 usually built by the husband himself, or by his own father or neighbors with the young man's help. Possibly the father of the bride also took part in its construction. The harpoon is part of the equipment of a man and is neither used by a woman nor given by her to a man.

583 In some of the literature, mention is made of abduction, but specific examples or cases that have been observed are not cited. Despard (b):698 maintained: "Sometimes wives are stolen, sometimes they run away. When recovered, after either case, they are beaten, the supposition being, it seems, that in the former case they themselves encouraged the theft" /cited in English/. The qualification mentioned is significant and is immediately put to account. Hyades (p):334 states briefly that "one sometimes observes a marriage by capture" /translated from French/ (19). The way of life and the position of a marriageable

19. It is not likely that the Mission Scientifique observed the procedure of an abduction. The same Hyades (b):1346 expresses himself in another place more vaguely, "sometimes there is marriage by capture" /translated from French/.

girl within her family absolutely contradicts all false assertions, for it is simply impossible to abduct a woman. It is true that
837 sometimes a married woman who wishes secretly to leave her husband accepts the help of a man whom she knows well in order to escape. If, however, she chooses this expedient, namely, flight under the protection of a man, it is her own decision. Moreover, it can happen that a married woman yields to persuasion and /643/ follows her seducer for a few days, after which she returns to her rightful husband. Neither case has anything to do with abduction. BD:227 gives kwissĭguntŭkū, "to take by force another man's wife and marry her as a wife" /cited in English/; also BD:303, manĭgulū, "to escape as a wife from her husband by stealth" /cited in English/. The proper meaning here,

/643 cont./

837 too, is that a lawful husband is abused when his wife puts herself in the hands of a devoted rival who carries her off and keeps her in his hut as his wife.

584 In one place Hyades (q) 378 speaks as though the girl is given away by her father. "The young girl is not consulted in the choice of a husband; the parents give her to the one who suits them and who is always the strongest and the most respected among the candidates" /translated from French/. This empty assertion utterly fails to recognize the fact that the parents are very much concerned about the future welfare of their child and that they inquire about the conduct of the husband, quite apart from the fact that they naturally find it painful to lose their daughter to the chosen man. Finally, arbitrarily disposing of her without consulting her wishes is not consistent with her right -- sometimes exercised -- of running away from her unbearable, rude husband and again seeking protection in the hut of her parents.

The true facts of the matter become very clear from what we have briefly said by way of correcting erroneous reports (20).

20. The two forms mentioned by Bove (c):128 are mutually exclusive, for he says: "Marriage can be considered as a purchase of the woman by the man and a union of love and reciprocal congeniality" /translated from Spanish/.

The marriageable girl is neither given away nor sold nor abducted. She is completely free to choose the chap who appeals to her fancy. Courtship rests on this fundamental freedom. That is why in the case of young people of marriageable age the elders sometimes waive the otherwise prevalent separation of the sexes, for "that is the time when a boy and girl become acquainted, when they feel whether they will get along together for the rest of their lives [in marriage]." This is what Mary said.

867 In instructing girls on the occasion of their first menstruation and in occasional conversations, older women repeat the following admonition in various words: "Do not give yourself to the first chap who comes along, who flatters you, but choose the one

/643 cont./

867 whom you really like. At first every chap will be so agreeable; later when he has married you, it turns out that he is crude or lazy or unbearable. Then you will have to suffer. So, consider before you decide!" Nelly added: "One must warn young girls and make them alert, otherwise they will thoughtlessly and prematurely say 'yes' to the first chap who comes along. Later when the young couple find they are unsuited to eath other, the elders among their relatives will suffer for it just as much as they themselves!" Likewise /644/ the young man is given a definite hint by his uncle to take as his bride only the girl with whom "he will live peaceably for the rest of his life."

584 That there is freedom in the first choice can also be deduced
586 from the right every woman has to run away from the husband who treats her badly or does not provide enough food for her. How could she be taken in again by her parents, which is generally done, if she had previously been actually sold? Her male relatives warn the husband and threaten to take back the mistreated wife. They would not dare do this if he [redacted] bought her for a price.

584 It very seldom happens that two young people become
578 united if there is a strained relationship or open hostility between their parents. If such a match should be developing, the parents of the boy and those of the girl make insulting, even threatening remarks against the other party within their own family but in order to thwart their children's intentions. It may be that a preliminary inclination toward a marital union will sooner or later disappear under this influence. Out of respect for her own parents the girl will forego her heart's desire, and since she makes no fuss about this, her closest relatives will not interfere on her behalf.

584 Still more awkward is the exceptional case of a girl who is
736 an orphan and very much dependent on her uncle and aunt. The
604 latter, driven by stubbornness or ambition, insistently urge her to choose the chap they recommend. If the solitary girl is unable to resist adequately, she will finally accede to their urging. My informers emphasized that such a case was rare, and that the previous history of the case would become publicly known only if this forced marriage, so to speak, should, in an exceptional instance, be dissolved.

517
736
595

/648 cont./
responsible for the fact that many husbands have a second wife, and that many younger men are married to an older widow who has brought him the children of her deceased husband.

6. Participation of the Relatives

584
614 The paternal uncle, indíruwa, unmistakably occupies a privileged position regarding his nephews and nieces. This is clearly evident at the time of the death of his married brother, as well as during his nephew's courtship and marriage. In the above lines we have already given a few data on the position of other adults relative to the marital plans of young people.

Following the dictates of his own heart, the young lad goes courting and tries to win the girl who promises to fulfill all his desires. The young lovers meet as often as possible, and their mutual affection grows as time goes on. If there is no pressure of outside circumstances, they amuse themselves in their amorous play without thinking of marrying soon. In their innermost conviction they have long since decided that they wish to belong together for life, without, however, expressing this openly to each other. And why should they! For the time being, neither of them reveals his feelings and intentions to his own parents; "they are somewhat ashamed!" I was told. A male neighbor and a female friend finally get the boy and girl to speak by making intimate allusions.

After the clandestine meetings and the love affair that can no longer be concealed have lasted long enough for the adults, the paternal uncle, indíruwa, one day decides to approach the boy very directly: "You have been meeting this girl for some time now. I finally ought to talk to your father about it!" Or he says: "We cannot go on seeing you daily with your beloved much longer. I shall soon inform your father in case you want to marry her!" This and similar expressions state the wish of the older relative to help the boy attain his goal. The latter realizes it. He takes this opportunity and has his uncle put the proposition before his father. Sometimes, if a boy wishes to reach his goal

/648 cont./

584 604 quickly, he himself openly approaches his uncle with the request that he tell the father of his heart's urgent desire. The uncle fulfills his mission without delay and without expressing any doubts or advising against it. If the boy has no indarowa, his maternal uncle, iman, helps him. The girl takes the same steps with her maternal aunt as soon as she has learned from her lover that his mission /648/ is already on the way to his father. The aunt also does not remonstrate with her; in fact, if the girl has given her consent to a boy whom she also likes, she is even happy about the decision. She brings the news to the mother.

The parents are never directly informed by their own children of the latter's wish and plan to marry. It is partly veneration and partly modesty that seal their lips. The only legally justified [582] decision or judgment that the parents can exercise is for them to prove and vouch for the fact that the two lovers are not related by blood. If this were actually the case, the marriage could not take place. With this point settled, the parents of the boy and of the girl discuss the plan of the couple with their respective relatives. Not infrequently the child is present and at the same time is given some advice. Finally, the uncle, as well as the aunt, insists that the parents give their final consent which they personally make known to the boy or the girl. The two lovers tell each other of the desired result.

584 604 626 The arrangement we have just described is generally made within a few days. Naturally, the intention of the young people is the topic of conversation in the whole neighborhood. After all, the planned marriage is to become known everywhere, and it is chiefly the uncle and aunt who consciously work toward this. Nelly told me that public opinion and the help of the community are to be won for the lovers, particularly if one of the pair of parents is opposed to their child's intention. Obviously this arrangement serves to assure freedom in the choice of a mate. In spite of all this, but very rarely, the stubbornness of one of the pair of parents or the selfishness of an uncle or aunt does not permit the desired union of the young people. In the first instance, neither the boy nor the girl dares confide in the uncle or aunt; in the other instance, the uncle and aunt misuse their authority, against which the lovers cannot summon the courage to seek help

/644 cont./

It has also happened, as Sara recalled, that the two lovers decided to elope, that they renounced any kind of marriage celebration, and that they remained away from their parents until they no longer feared reproach. Even if a child should be subjected to threats, he would find sufficient support from close relatives against the inadmissible interference of parents, if only he does not become intimidated and stands his ground. It is the special duty of the uncle to help so that every young person who wishes to marry is permitted to make an absolutely free decision. In case the uncle's influence on the parents does not bring results, he can even influence public opinion against them if they restrict their child's freedom of choice. All opposition dissolves automatically when the young couple has a child to be cared for. Thus, a person who must fear the disapproval or resistance of parents toward a marriage elopes with his partner; once the couple is blessed with one or two children, no one can interfere or separate them.

/645/ A woman who becomes a man's second wife also has unrestricted freedom of choice. If she is a widow, she must sometimes be glad if a man will take her, whether she likes him or not, and she suppresses her own wishes without a murmur. Her position is more favorable if an older man, whose wife has perhaps become incapable of working, woos her. From the start she can then secure for herself certain rights and a favorable position in the family. In the great majority of polygamous marriages the two women are sisters (21); the second one to be taken by the man is

21. This custom may be verified in Bridges' (i):21 words: "When a man married more wives than one they were generally sisters, which fact tendered greatly to strengthen the family party" /cited in English/. Relationship by marriage as such does not constitute blood relationship, hence does not hinder marriage (p. 417).

thus frequently better situated in many respects than in a monogamous marriage.

/649 cont./
584 elsewhere. In the opinion of the majority, such abuses are re-
604 garded as unjust; hence the guilty ones -- they are aware of be-
626 ing such -- make a secret of the fact that they have interfered without permission. The relatives and the larger community are steadfastly and as a matter of course on the side of the lovers, provided always that blood relationship is excluded. To the extent that the general public knows of the marriage plans of the couple, it prepares steadfastly for the forthcoming marriage. Meanwhile the aunts and female neighbors approach the girl in friendly good-will and wish her all kinds of happiness for the future, making this dependent on the recently imparted advice and the earlier instructions on the occasion of the menarche. The boy is merely given additional earnest warnings in case his conduct requires it.

587 When a couple enters a second marriage, the /650/ formalities that apply to the first marriage are omitted. "They are simply no longer necessary," as Calderon emphasized. "The couple know very well that they need not let themselves be influenced by anyone in their decision!" In one way or another, however, the newly wedded couple tells those nearest them of their union, so that the public in general will soon learn of it.

584 Marriageable young people in olden times were in an in-
182 comparably more favorable position; each one, following the dictates of his heart, selected from many persons the one desired. For the last few decades marital conditions have been affected by a complete disintegration of the natural order. They do not offer even a slight guarantee that the Yamana will continue as a people. In fact, the fate of the Yamana is already sealed.

7. Obstacles to Marriage

582 The basic freedom in the selection of a mate does not eliminate the fact that there are some things taken for granted which prohibit marital union. All adults are well informed about them. In particular it is the duty of the parents under no circumstances to permit the marital union of their child with a related person (p. 416). A few introductory remarks will be given before we list the actual obstacles to marriage.

/657 cont./

515
177

"Marriage was recognized just as much as all other degrees of relationship, for all of which they [the Yamana] have their specific terms."

about by the dominance of European civilization has strangled this judicious tribal custom, along with much that was original. The Indians of today regret that some of their countrymen enter a marriage without the ceremony of former times. Mary, who was indignant over the widespread lack of form, very much lamented these conditions: "A woman, after all, is not an object, not a piece of wood or something, that one takes without ceremony. A girl who gives herself to a man without the formalities customary among us is not a real woman. It was so nice in former times when the painted bride was given to the bridegroom, who was also painted. Everybody was very happy on those occasions!" Again it is European influence that has killed the feeling for their native tribal customs among the younger generation. I learned the bulk of what is contained in the preceding pages from reliable old Alfredo on my second journey.

/658/ 9. Parents-In-Law and Children-In-Law

584
606

In the days before and after the wedding, the bridegroom is very obliging and anxious to serve his parents-in-law. There is no legal obligation for service in the form of work or for gifts, but it is a matter of concern to him to obtain the favor of the girl's parents in order that they will surely and without reservation give their consent to the planned marriage. It is well known that a certain shyness prevents the lovers from revealing their turbulent desires. One day shortly before the wedding, when the love of the two young people has already become known, the bridegroom, in order to gain admittance into the hut of the girl's parents, places a rather large bundle of wood in front of the hut and waits until he is called in (40). If this happens, he interprets it as the surest

[171]

40. It is well known that among the Selk'nam, also, the young chap who is anxious to marry resorts to silent, patient waiting in front of the

/658 cont./

but of his beloved, until her father admits him and thereby announces his approval of the marriage (Vol. I, 327).

guarantee of the old people's approval of his marriage plan. He conceals his innermost joy and henceforth conducts himself as ancient tribal custom demands of a son-in-law. Free, open intercourse is not permitted him nor the daughter-in-law with their parents-in-law. On the other hand, they are obliged to render service to the latter. What the son-in-law does for them immediately before and after the wedding should probably more accurately be called appreciation and a show of gratitude for the willingness of these parents to hand over their daughter to him. In order to demonstrate clearly his readiness to please his father-in-law, the lover finds out what he lacks or expects or particularly desires, and that is what he procures, whether it be a canoe, a harpoon, or a beautiful fur cloak. Beyond that, he brings many other trifles to his father-in-law's hut until the marriage celebration begins. At the same time the bride, if possible, renders small services to her future mother-in-law, but these are not expected or taken for granted as in the case of the bridegroom. That she, too, favors her parents-in-law with gifts clearly indicates, however, that the presents delivered by the bridegroom cannot be regarded as bride purchase (p. 404).

The limitations on intercourse between children-in-law and their parents-in-law constitute a definite custom of avoidance. It is regarded as inadmissible and improper to address the parents-in-law or to interrupt their conversation with incidental remarks. When one meets them or enters their hut, one may not greet them; if one happens to run into them, one should, with downcast eyes, give them a wide berth. It is the general custom that one does not sit down opposite them, never looks them in the eye, and never sits next to them. If it happens that a son-in-law or daughter-in-law is in the same hut with the parents-in-law, the former must move far away and /659/ turn from them, that is to say, turn to one side or turn their backs. If several men gather together, the son-in-law chooses his place in this circle so that it is farthest removed from his father-in-law. He remains silent

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 5266 Yahgan 5265

536 tion. Intercourse between the unmarried was disapproved, but
582 breaches of the code were not infrequent. Marriage between blood relatives, however distant, was in theory taboo; in practice, the prohibition included half-siblings, uncle and niece, aunt and nephew, first cousins, both parallel and cross, and seemingly extended somewhat beyond these limits. Since near relatives commonly lived near one another, marriages tended to be locally exogamous. Marriages with mates from far distant localities, especially outside one's own of the five dialectic groups, were disliked and infrequent. Marriage with a mother and her daughter was disapproved, but not so strongly as marriage with near blood-kin. Sponsors were barred from marrying their respective candidates of the *tákuus*[1] initiation rite.

584 Choice of mate was ordinarily free on the part both of the boy and of
583 the girl, and appears to have been based largely on mutual affection and regard. Gifts from the groom to the bride's father were given and expected, as were also certain services before and after marriage. But a bride-price as stipulated by or haggled for by the father was absent. Bride capture or stealing, if it occurred, must have been very rare.

582 Boys and girls did not marry until they had passed through the required *tákuus* initiation. Gusinde (1937, p. 633) estimates the more common chronological ages of first marriages as about 17 to 19 years for boys, and 15 to 18 for girls.

Monogamy was by far the most prevalent form of marriage. Polyandry did not occur. Polygyny was permitted, but was uncommon. A few men had two wives, more commonly sisters; cases of three wives, if they occurred, must have been very rare. On the death of a man's wife, he had a certain marriage claim to her unmarried sister. On the death of a woman's husband, she frequently became, and under certain circumstances was expected or obliged to become, the wife of his oldest surviving brother, especially his unmarried brother, unless she married another man. This custom (the levirate) was, from the native point of view, primarily an obligation of the father's brother to be responsible for his nephews and nieces, a responsibility that lay on the uncle even though his brother's widow married another man. A surviving married brother was not entirely free to marry the widow, as his own wife might object.

585 The chief wedding rite consisted in painting the cheeks of the couple with three red parallel horizontal lines. These were worn and renewed for a week, during which time there were feasting and dancing, and at the end of which the couple went off together in their own canoe.
591 Customarily, they remained with the bride's people for a few months,

[1] See the second of English ch, f of English ch.